

**CLAIMS**

1. A method for grading a security of a publicly traded company, comprising the steps of:

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- a. evaluating the financial, business performance of the company against a pre-determined set of business performance criteria;
  - b. evaluating the market performance of the security against pre-determined security performance criteria; and
  - c. assigning to the security a grade based upon the evaluated performances, using predetermined criteria.

10 2. A method for grading a security of a publicly traded company, comprising the steps of, at intervals:

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- a. evaluating the financial, business performance of the company against a pre-determined set of business performance criteria;
  - b. evaluating the market performance of the security against pre-determined security performance criteria;
  - c. assigning to the security a first grade based upon the evaluated performances, using predetermined criteria; and
  - d. assigning to the security a second grade based upon a history over time of assigned first grades.

20 3. The method of claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the security is a stock.

4. A system for grading a security of a publicly traded company, comprising:

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- a. means for receiving an identification of a security for which a grade is requested;
  - b. means, responsive to the identification, for evaluating the financial, business performance of the company against a pre-determined set of business performance criteria;
  - c. means, also responsive to the identification, for evaluating the market performance of the security against pre-determined security performance criteria; and
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- d. means for assigning to the security a grade based upon the evaluated performances, using predetermined criteria.

5. A system for grading a security of a publicly traded company, comprising:

- 5 a. means for evaluating, at intervals, the financial, business performance of the company against a pre-determined set of business performance criteria;
- b. means for evaluating, at intervals, the market performance of the security against pre-determined security performance criteria;
- 10 c. means for assigning to the security, at each of said intervals, a first grade based upon the evaluated performances, using predetermined criteria; and
- d. means for assigning to the security a second grade based upon a history over time of assigned first grades.

15 6. The system of claim 4 or claim 5 wherein the security is a stock.

Approved